PRACTICAL APPLICATION

CRITIQUING A RESEARCH REPORT

Cheryl Beck (1990) has developed a list of insightful questions that every researcher should answer satisfactorily before submitting a final version of a research report. Although she created it for students and professional colleagues in the field of nursing, we have adapted her list of questions to apply to research report writers in general. The following checklist should not only help you evaluate the reports that you read but can also serve as a guide as you assess your own writing.

CHECKLIST
Criteria for critiquing a research report

Project 12.1 asks you to use this checklist to critique a research report and complete. Go to http://www.prenhall.com/leedy

Step 1. The Problem	Yes	No
______ Is the problem clearly and concisely stated?	____	____
______ Is the problem adequately narrowed down into a researchable problem?	____	____
______ Is the problem significant enough to warrant a formal research effort?	____	____
______ Is the relationship between the identified problem and previous research clearly described?	____	____
Step 2. Literature Review		
______ Is the literature review logically organized?	____	____
______ Does the review provide a critique of the relevant studies?	____	____
______ Are gaps in knowledge about the research problem identified?	____	____
______ Are important relevant references omitted?	____	____
Step 3. Theoretical or Conceptual Framework		
______ Is the theoretical framework easily linked with the problem, or does it seem forced?	____	____
______ If a conceptual framework is used, are the concepts adequately defined, and are the relationships among these concepts clearly identified?	____	____
Step 4. Research Variables		
______ Are the independent and dependent variables operationally defined?	____	____
______ Are any confounding variables present? If so, are they identified?	____	____
Step 5. Hypotheses		
______ Are the hypotheses clear, testable, and specific?	____	____
______ Does each hypothesis describe a predicted relationship between two or more variables included in each hypothesis?	____	____
______ Do the hypotheses logically flow from the theoretical or conceptual framework?	____	____
Step 6. Sampling		
______ Is the sample size adequate?	____	____
______ Is the sample representative of the defined population?	____	____
______ Is the method for selection of the sample appropriate?	____	____
______ Is there any sampling bias in the chosen method?	____	____
______ Are the criteria for selecting the sample clearly identified?	____	____

Step 7. Research Design

______	Is the research design adequately described?	____	____
______	Is the design appropriate for the research problem?	____	____
______	Does the research design address issues related to the internal and external validity of the study?	____	____

Step 8. Data Collection Methods

______	Are the data collection methods appropriate for the study?	____	____
______	Are the data collection instruments described adequately?	____	____
______	Do the measurement tools have reasonable validity and reliability?	____	____

Step 9. Data Analysis

______	Is the results section clearly and logically organized?	____	____
______	Is the type of analysis appropriate for the level of measurement for each variable?	____	____
______	Are the tables and figures clear and understandable?	____	____
______	Is the statistical test the correct one for answering the research question?	____	____

Step 10. Interpretation and Discussion of the Findings

______	Does the investigator clearly distinguish between actual findings and interpretations?	____	____
______	Are the interpretations based on the data obtained?	____	____
______	Are the findings discussed in relation to previous research and to the conceptual/theoretical framework?	____	____
______	Are unwarranted generalizations made beyond the study sample?	____	____
______	Are the limitations of the results identified?	____	____
______	Are implications of the results discussed?	____	____
______	Are recommendations for future research identified?	____	____
______	Are the conclusions justified?	____	____